

## A WHITE WOODCHUCK

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF AN EXTREME-  
LY INTERESTING PET.

A Wild Little Creature That Became Domesticated by Kindness—His Long Periods of Sleep and How He Looked During Them—His Awakening.

Some years ago, in the spring, while traveling on the Belfast Branch railroad, just before arriving at Brook Station, I chanced to be looking out of the car window and saw a curious looking animal run under a pile of brush in a gravel pit near the track. I concluded at once that it must be an albino woodchuck, as my husband had told me he had been seen in that vicinity. At the station I hastily procured a basket, and, securing the assistance of two boys I proceeded without loss of time to the gravel pit, and overhauling some of the brush soon found the prize. As I had conjectured, it was an albino woodchuck about two-thirds grown, pure white, with pink eyes, and as saucy a little fellow as one would care to handle. "Brooks" much difficulty I dropped my basket over him, and securing him returned to the station, boxed him up, and expressed him home to my husband, with instructions to keep him on a milk diet until my return a week later.

On returning home I found my pet ensconced in a nest of cotton, purring away like a contented kitten. He seemed quite reconciled to the restraints of captivity, had already become so tame as to allow his beautiful snow white coat to be stroked, and seemed especially to enjoy gentle stroking about the face, which I think is a characteristic of most wild animals, and one of the ways of establishing confidential relations with them. For the first year his food consisted principally of bread and milk, with an occasional handful of plantain leaves. A most interesting sight was to watch him while being fed. He would sit up like a squirrel, holding his food in his paws. He soon learned to take his meal from a spoon. Grasping it near the bowl, he would hold it very gracefully until the milk was all lapped out; then, with a little assistance, would return it to the cup to be filled, and repeat the operation until his appetite was satisfied. Then he would go into his nest, roll himself up like a kitten and take a nap of several hours. With one exception he never showed his wild, savage nature during the two years of his life in confinement.

Early in the fall the disposition to hibernate began to show itself by his lack of activity, and he remained in his nest most of the time, his sleep becoming so profound that he could be taken from the nest without awaking. About Nov. 1 his sleep for the winter began. He was placed in the cellar, where the temperature was very even—just above the freezing point—and here he remained without being disturbed until the middle of March.

During all this time his body remained cold, and to all outward appearances lifeless. About the time of his awakening in March, upon visiting him and placing my hand on his body, I found it to be quite warm, and after rubbing him for a few moments he began to yawn and stretch, but did not get upon his feet. The next day I took him into a warm room in order to watch the process of awakening, rubbing his body and legs for an hour or more. He seemed quite indifferent to my solicitude on his behalf, but gradually awakened, opened his eyes, chattered his teeth, and gave that peculiar whicker so characteristic of a disturbed woodchuck.

His efforts to stand upon his feet were for some hours ineffectual. He seemed to have lost the use of them. Toward night, however, he seemed to regain full control of all his faculties and partook of a little milk. I was surprised to notice but little loss of fat during the long period of sleep. He had become excessively fat before going into his winter sleep, and I expected that would be absorbed during that period. His fur had become long and of a beautiful silver gloss—so white and silky that it was a pleasure to stroke and pat him.

Upon his first awakening, and for a day or two he seemed to have forgotten his friends and manifested his wild nature so much as to make himself very disagreeable. He ate with a voracious appetite and began to grow thin. In a few days he became a mere skeleton of his former self, and for several weeks—until June 1—did not begin to take on flesh. He now displayed more activity than at any other time during the year.

The following winter his sleep was interrupted once in two weeks. This was done by wrapping him in warm flannels and placing him in a warm room. He partook but little food, and during the period of two days of broken rest he seemed very uneasy. About the last of March, when he should have awakened to activity, he was taken sick and died in convulsions after a sickness of two days. I now have him nicely mounted in my collection, among which are several albinos, but none so perfect as my beautiful pet.—Cor. Forest and Stream.

## A Pair of Miser.

Mr. and Miss Dancer are reputed the most notorious misers of the Eighteenth century. The manner in which this couple were found after death to have disposed of their wealth was even more strange than could have been their method of acquiring it. The total value was £20,000, which was thus disposed of—£2,500 were found under a dunghill; £500 in an old coat, nailed to the manger in the stable; £600 in notes were hidden away in an old teapot; the chimney yielded £2,000, stowed in nineteen separate crevices. Several jugs filled with coins were secreted in the stable loft.—Cassell's Journal.

## A Profession for Him.

Fond Mother (or delicate dude)—I think it is time Clarence selected a profession. What would you advise?

Old Gent (selectively). He might do nicely as a typewriter girl.—New York Weekly.

## The Result of a Dream.

Before Watts, the discoverer of the present mode of making shot, had his notable dream, induced by overindulgence in stimulants, the manufacture in question was a slow, laborious and consequently costly process. Great bars of lead had to be pounded into sheets of thickness nearly equal to the diameter of the shot desired. These sheets had then to be cut into little cubes, placed in a revolving barrel, and there rolled until, by the constant friction, the edges wore off from the little cubes and they became spheres.

Watts had often rocked his brain trying to discover some better and less costly scheme, but in vain. Finally, after spending an evening with some boon companions at an alehouse, he went home, went to bed and soon fell asleep. His slumbers, however, were disturbed by unwelcome dreams, in one of which he was out with "the boys," and as they were stumbling home it began to rain shot—beautiful globules of polished, shining lead—in such numbers that he and his companions had to seek shelter.

In the morning Watts remembered his curious dream and it obtained itself on his mind all day. He began to wonder what shape molten lead would assume in falling through the air, and finally, to set his mind at rest, he ascended to the top of the steeple of the church of St. Mary at Radcliffe and dropped slowly and regularly a ladleful of molten lead into the moat below. Descending, he took from the bottom of the shallow pool several handfuls of the most perfect shot he had ever seen. Watt's fortune was made, for from this exploit emanated the idea of the shot tower, which ever since has been the only means employed in the manufacture of the little missiles so important in war and sport.—Boston Commonwealth.

## A Sign from Heaven.

"A queer story was related to me many years ago by Rev. William Simpson, then one of the leading lights of the Methodist church in eastern Iowa and western Illinois," said Harvey Goodenough, a Hawkeye pioneer at the Laclede. "While the Mormons were carrying things with a high hand in western Illinois they converted a young woman, a member of Elder Simpson's flock. A few months spent at Nauvoo sufficed to disenchanted her, and she returned home a confirmed skeptic. The church people labored with her long and patiently, but without overcoming her unbelief. Before her bedroom window stood a large oak tree. She announced that she was going to pray the Lord for a sign—that she would ask him if he really had an existence to manifest it by causing the great oak tree to wither, as Christ is said to have blasted the unfruitful fig tree. She was to prefer he request for a sign upon which to ground her faith at 10 o'clock Sunday morning. Her resolution at once became the talk of the town, and many visited the tree and carefully examined it. It was perfectly sound, full of sap and covered with a profusion of bright green leaves. At sunset every leaf was brown and withered in the depths of winter. The elder stated that with a party of men he cut the tree down and dug up the stump, and that it was dead from the rootstock branch to the smallest root. The young woman's prayer had been answered. She at once re-entered the church and devoted her life to missionary work, spending several years in China and Japan.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

## Platinum Mines of Russia.

The platinum beds of the Ural mountains are the only ones in the world in which this metal is found in grains. Platinum is found in Brazil and in the Cordilleras in the hard serpentine rocks, but never in the form of grains. The platinum beds of the Ural mountains are found in various districts in the north at Besserski, in the government of Perm, in the district of Knotourski and in the state properties of Goroblagodsk, where sixty-six mining concessions have been granted. All the beds of the northern region are situated in the basin of the river Touri, in that of the tributary stream of Taghil and in other tributaries higher up.

On the western declivity of the Ural mountains there is another platinum bed near the river Outka, a tributary of the Tchoussova, and the basins of the higher tributaries of the Outka, near the Ural river. The platinum found in these places is in the form of grains, and frequently containing gold. The weight of these grains is from seventeen to twenty-one grams to every 1,440 kilograms of sand.—Exchange.

## The Mixed Race of India.

Eurasia has no boundaries. It lies, a varying social fact, all over India, thick in the great cities, thickest in Calcutta, where the conditions of climate and bread winning are most suitable, and where, moreover, Eurasian charities are most numerous. Wherever Europeans have come and gone these people have sprung up in weedy testimony of them—these people who do not go, who have received somewhat in the feeble inheritance of their blood that makes it possible for them to live and die in India. Nothing will ever exterminate Eurasia; it clings to the sun and the soil, and is marvelously propagative within its borders.—Sara J. Duncan in Popular Science Monthly.

## It Was Not Slang.

A contentious church member in a western town recently attempted to have his pastor disciplined for using the slang phrase "not in it" in the pulpit, but the bottom dropped out of his charge when the clergyman produced the manuscript of his sermon and read this sentence from it, "In a word, my Christian heart, the ark was a miniature world; there was no form of life that was not in it."—New York Tribune.

## Penitentiary Boards Contempt.

Judge Duffy—How dare you come into court and take your hat off! Tramp—But, judge, you know I'm not a stranger here.—Texas Siftings.

## RHEUMATISM PREVALENT.

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## PEOPLE WHO HAVE FOUND RELIEF.

Rheumatism is more prevalent here than ever before. When this disease fastens upon an individual with its soreness and pain, swelling the joints, rendering him helpless in his movements, and shortening his use of life, he is indeed an object of pity.

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The beautiful daughter of Mr. James Mc Farland, of DeMoines, Ia., was helpless for months with sciatic rheumatism. After a few doses of Dr. Kennedy's Favorite Remedy, she began to grow better, appetite improved, slept well, and continuing its use, was cured.

"I was confined to my bed with rheumatism near my heart, writes Mr. C. L. Seaver, of Birmingham, Conn., and used Dr. Kennedy's Favorite Remedy a short time before it drove the rheumatism out of my system."

Mr. G. Lusing, of Troy, N. Y., had rheumatism so bad that he had to be turned over in bed. After using Dr. Kennedy's Favorite Remedy but a short while was restored to health.

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